



# REPORT

TO THE

**BELLINGHAM RURAL DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

**For the Year 1967**

BY

**J. M. McEWAN, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.**  
**Medical Officer of Health**



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# REPORT

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For the Year 1967

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Medical Officer of Health

**STAFF :**

*Medical Officer of Health :*

J. M. McEWAN, M.B., CH.B., D.P.H.

*Chief Public Health Inspector and Surveyor :*

S. CLOUGH, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

*Additional Public Health Inspector, to August, 1967 :*

E. B. MILLER, C.R.S.H.

*From November, 1967 :*

H. F. L. DAVIES, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

Mrs. J. FULLERTON : *Clerk/Typist*

**OFFICES :**

**COUNCIL OFFICES, BELLINGHAM**

**HEXHAM                    -                    NORTHUMBERLAND**

Telephone : Bellingham 239.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Rural District Council  
of Bellingham :*

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1967.

In most years there is little to record about changes in this very large and thinly populated Rural District, and even less appeared to happen during 1967 in the way of altered social and environmental amenities. This is in fact due to the nature of the District, but in part it is due to the progressive outlook of the Council and the extent to which they have already provided the modern facilities of mains water, sewage disposal and new housing throughout the area. As a result little more remains to be done except in minor ways. Rural depopulation has a relatively small effect on the District, which has never had a large population, and the fall in numbers each year is slight. Of the greatest benefit would be light employment for girls leaving school and young married women, as the main opportunities for work in agriculture and forestry are not open to them.

The vital statistics compare unfavourably throughout with 1966, but one year in isolation is not of great significance and the numbers involved are small. There is a further reduction in the population by 10. There were only 54 live births compared with 83, and 77 deaths compared with 56 in 1966. These figures give a birth rate below and a death rate above the national average. The same number of deaths in the first year of life as in the previous year led to a higher infant mortality rate, which again compares unfavourably with the figures for England and Wales. The variations that have occurred in these statistics in previous years suggest that future returns will compensate for this unfavourable year.

The four deaths in infants were due respectively to infection, to heart disease, to congenital malformation and to accident. The majority of deaths were due to diseases of the heart and circulation, and in people of advanced age. The increased mortality was accounted for by a large increase in the number of male deaths.

There were again few notifications of infectious disease, with measles on a small scale. There was an outbreak of



Salmonella infection on a farm, and while this organism is generally associated with food poisoning, these four cases had not taken food away from home during the incubation period. It is significant that there had previously been Salmonella infection among the calves. One case of pulmonary tuberculosis was notified during the year, in a chambermaid at a large hotel. The staff were all X-rayed using mobile equipment, with negative results, but a large number of visitors must have been at risk.

The collection of samples for bacteriological investigation and their delivery in time at the Public Health Laboratory in Newcastle presents difficulties in such an isolated District with a small staff. It used to be possible to send routine specimens by rail, but there is now no rail service. Some continue to be sent by post. Water samples can be collected and taken to Newcastle with great difficulty, and these samples present the main problem, as they must be collected and delivered within six hours. Investigation for Brucellosis of herds from which milk is retailed without treatment has been undertaken by the Northumberland County Health Inspector, and I am indebted to Mr. Lister for his work and co-operation in this connection. Positive cultures were obtained from two dairy herds and the milk from the cows affected was withdrawn from sale. These farms continue under investigation.

Twenty eight houses in Bellingham were completed for the Council during 1967. There are no immediate plans for further building, and present needs seem to be fairly well met. As it is being accepted that Bellingham and Otterburn are to be the centres of development, it is probable that further Council houses will be built there. Very few houses are built privately, but the modernisation of older houses with grant-aid goes on steadily. In a district such as this, improvement grants are particularly to be encouraged, or otherwise older property will fall into disuse and not be replaced.

The Newcastle & Gateshead Water Company, as statutory undertakers, continue to supply the greater part of the area with water of satisfactory quality and quantity. Regular sampling of the water is done by the Company, who make the results known to this Department and deal promptly if action is required. The Council remain responsible for proposed and private supplies and 16 samples were taken from

these sources during the year. No less than 10 of them were unfit, but advice as to the exclusion of surface contamination and better collection methods usually bring the supply up to acceptable standards. Where these fail, an alternative source can usually be found. No chemical analysis was carried out during the year, but the water is found to be low in natural fluoride at 0.1 to 0.2 parts per million and not to be unduly plumbo-solvent. Detailed information about the water supply in parishes, together with properties, to be reported on where they apply to the District, are given in the Chief Public Health Inspector's part of the report.

The sewerage and sewage disposal scheme for East Woodburn awaits the acquisition of land, and should not be long delayed. The Council agreed during the year to take over a new small private scheme at Kirkharle and, after improvements, a private scheme at Reedsmouth. The larger schemes have been completed, and the arrangements in the District are adequate. The very small communities must still rely on septic tanks, and while some 50 privies are still in use, their number is decreasing slowly with the improvement of older property.

Mr. E. B. Miller resigned during the year on transfer to a more responsible appointment. In 9 years of satisfactory work here he gained a varied experience in both Public Health and Surveying and will I am sure have a successful career. Mr. H. F. L. Davies was appointed to fill the position of Additional Public Health Inspector and even in a short time promises to be a valuable member of the staff.

I should like to thank the Councillors for the interest they continue to take in the work of the Health Department, and again to acknowledge the courtesy and help I have received from the Clerk and other officials. The staff have carried out their duties during the year with the usual efficiency.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

J. M. McEWAN,

*Medical Officer of Health*

## VITAL STATISTICS

### Population

The population estimated at 30th June, 1967, was 5,120, a decrease of 10 on the previous year.

### Death Rate

77 deaths were registered during 1967, giving a death rate of 16.7 per 1,000 population, or 11.2 when the Area Comparability Factor is applied. The figure for England and Wales is 15.0 per 1,000.

### Birth Rate

There were 54 live births during the year, and when an adjustment factor is applied this gives a birth rate of 12.65 per 1,000 population. This is to be compared with the national figure of 17.2 per 1,000.

With no still births, the still birth rate is Nil per 1,000 births, compared with 14.8 per 1,000 for England and Wales.

### Infant Mortality

4 infants died under the age of one year, giving an infant mortality rate of 74.0 per 1,000 live births, compared with the national rate of 18.3 per 1,000.

Live births	..	..	..	..	..	..	54
Rate per 1,000 population	..	..	..	..	..	..	12.65
(England & Wales 17.2 per 1,000)							
Illegitimate live births..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Per cent of total live births	..	..	..	..	..	..	7.4
Still births	..	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
Rate per 1,000 live and still births	..	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
(England & Wales 14.8 per 1,000)							
Total live and still births	..	..	..	..	..	..	54
Infant deaths (under one year)	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Total infant deaths per 1,000 total live births	..	..	..	..	..	..	74.0
(England & Wales 18.3 per 1,000)							
Legitimate infant deaths per 1,000 legitimate live births	..	..	..	..	..	..	74.0
Illegitimate infant deaths per 1,000 illegitimate live births	..	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
Neo-natal mortality rate deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 total live births	..	..	..	..	..	..	Nil



Early neo-natal mortality rate (deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live births)	.. .. .	Nil
Perinatal mortality rate (still births and deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live and still births)		Nil
Maternal mortality Rate per 1,000 live and still births	.. .. .	Nil

## INFECTIOUS DISEASE

### Measles

11 Cases were notified.

### Scarlet Fever

One case was notified.

### Respiratory Tuberculosis

One case was notified.

## STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

The area of the Bellingham Rural District is 246,645 acres.

The estimated population for 1967 is 5,120.

The number of inhabited houses on 31st December, 1967, was 1,782 of which 233 are owned by the Local Authority

The sum represented by a penny rate is £674.

The rateable value is £164,486.

## HEALTH SERVICES

### Laboratory Facilities

Facilities in the area continue to be provided by the Public Health Laboratory in Newcastle General Hospital which gives an efficient service.

### Ambulance Service

The local ambulance service is provided for the County Council by the Red Cross, and a satisfactory service is maintained. In addition to the ambulance, a car service is available for suitable cases and is of considerable value in such a large district. Since the passenger train service was

discontinued much extra mileage has been run to allow patients to keep hospital appointments and to allow mothers and children to attend clinics, but the use of the service appears to have stabilised now.

Since 1961 a call house has been established at the British Red Cross Society ambulance depot in Bellingham, at which requests for the ambulance car service are received.

### Home Nursing and Health Visiting

The district nurses are all provided with cars and their nursing work continues to be excellent. In spite of the difficulty in arranging for suitable help in a country district, the Home Help Service run by the County Council continues to function satisfactorily. The County Health Visitors work in harmony with the General Practitioners in the area and do much valuable work.

### Maternity and Child Welfare

Five Maternity and Child Welfare Centres, staffed by the County Council, operate at Bellingham, Otterburn, Byrness, Kielder and Wark. Immunisation against diphtheria is carried out at these centres or is done by the General Practitioner, while all vaccination is carried out by the General Practitioners.

TABLE 1

The following table shows the principal statistics for the years 1963—1967.

Year	Live Birth Rate per 1,000 Population	General Death Rate per 1,000 Population	Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 Live Births
1963	19.01	12.06	29.7
1964	20.34	9.81	12.58
1965	15.26	10.05	Nil.
1966	19.4	10.91	48.2
1967	12.65	10.7	74.0

## ANNUAL RETURNS OF FOOD POISONING NOTIFICATIONS, YEAR 1967

### Food Poisoning Notifications Returned to Registrar General

						TOTAL
Outbreaks due to identified agents	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
Outbreaks of undiscovered cause	..	..	..	..	..	1
Single Cases :						
Agent identified	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
Unknown cause	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
Total						1

TABLE II.

Infectious Diseases notified during the year 1967 :—

Notifiable Disease	Males.	Females	Totals
Scarlet Fever.. ..	1	—	1
Whooping Cough .. ..	—	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis .. ..	—	—	—
Measles .. ..	8	3	11
Diphtheria .. ..	—	—	—
Acute Pneumonia .. ..	—	—	—
Dysentery .. ..	—	—	—
Smallpox .. ..	—	—	—
Acute Encephalitis .. ..	—	—	—
Enteric or Typhoid Fevers .. ..	—	—	—
Erysipelas .. ..	—	—	—
Meningococcal Infection .. ..	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia .. ..	—	—	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum .. ..	—	—	—
Tuberculosis .. ..	—	1	1
Totals .. ..	9	4	13

TABLE III.  
TUBERCULOSIS

New Cases and Mortality during 1967 :—

Age Periods	New Cases				Nett Deaths in Bellingham Rural District			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0— 1 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1— 5 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—15 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—25 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25—35 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35—45 ..	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
45—55 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55—65 ..	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 & over	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals ..	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—

TABLE IV

The following table classifies deaths according to their age groups :—

Age Groups			Males	Females	Totals.
under 4 weeks	..		2	2	4
4 weeks to 1 year			—	2	—
1 to 4 years	..		—	—	—
5—14	..	..	—	—	—
15—24	..	..	—	—	—
25—34	..	..	—	—	—
35—44	..	..	1	—	1
45—54	..	..	6	2	8
55—64	..	..	4	5	9
65—74	..	..	17	7	24
75 and over	..	..	17	14	31



# II

## ANALYSIS OF DEATHS BY CAUSES

According to Registrar General's Classification.

Causes of Death	1966		1967	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
1. Tuberculosis, respiratory ..	—	—	—	—
2. Tuberculosis, other ..	—	—	—	—
3. Syphilitic disease ..	—	—	—	—
4. Diphtheria .. ..	—	—	—	—
5. Whooping Cough ..	—	—	—	—
6. Meningococcal infections ..	—	—	—	—
7. Acute Poliomyelitis ..	—	—	—	—
8. Measles .. ..	—	—	—	—
9. Other infective and para- sitic diseases .. ..	—	—	—	1
10. Malignant Neoplasm— Stomach ..	—	1	1	1
11. do. Lung and Bronchus ..	1	1	2	—
12. do. Breast ..	—	1	—	2
13. do. Uterus ..	—	—	—	—
14. Other malignant and Lymphatic neoplasms ..	1	3	3	1
15. Leukaemia, Aleukaemia ..	—	—	—	—
16. Diabetes .. ..	—	—	—	—
17. Vascular lesions of nervous system .. ..	3	5	6	7
18. Coronary Disease, Angina..	7	6	11	7
19. Hypertension with heart disease .. ..	—	1	1	—
20. Other heart disease ..	1	9	6	6
21. Other circulatory disease ..	1	2	1	2
22. Influenza .. ..	—	—	—	—
23. Pneumonia .. ..	1	3	2	—
24. Bronchitis .. ..	2	—	3	1
25. Other diseases of respira- tory system .. ..	—	—	—	—
26. Ulcer of Stomach & duo- denum .. ..	—	—	—	—
27. Gastritis, Enteritis, Diarr- hoea .. ..	—	—	—	—
28. Nephritis and Nephrosis ..	—	—	—	—
29. Hyperplasia of Prostate ..	—	—	—	—
30. Pregnancy, Child Birth, Abortion .. ..	—	—	—	—
31. Congenital Malformations..	—	—	1	—
32. Other defined and ill- defined diseases ..	4	1	4	1
33. Motor Vehicle accidents ..	1	—	2	—
34. All other accidents.. ..	—	1	4	1
35. Suicide .. ..	—	—	—	—
36. Homicide and operations of war .. ..	—	—	—	—
	22	34	47	30
	56		77	



# Public Health Inspector's Annual Report

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1967**

The area is essentially rural in character and no major change has occurred since the last Report. The provision of new individual water supplies, water carriage conversions and refurbishing of the older type of housing continues. The National and Border Forest Parks provide a large area of scenic beauty and every endeavour is made to ensure that development retains this nature and character of rural life.

The main settlements are now served with basic services ; Ridsdale sewage scheme is now operational and preliminary works have started on East Woodburn scheme.

## WATER

The position at the time of this report, since the Newcastle & Gateshead Water Company, under the Water Order of 1951, became the statutory water undertaker covering this area, is as follows :—

Number of dwellings supplied from public mains :

<i>Parish</i>					<i>No. of Properties</i>
Bellingham	..	..	..	..	380
Tarset	..	..	..	..	55
Falstone	..	..	..	..	30
Wark	..	..	..	..	205
Otterburn	..	..	..	..	107
Rochester (including Byrness)	..	..			78
Woodburn	..	..	..	..	164
Kirkwhelpington	..	..	..	..	70
Birtley	..	..	..	..	38
Forestry Commission private supply to Kielder (and Lewisburn camping site)	..	..	..	..	126

**Samples**

During the year some 9 samples were taken from private sources of supply :—

					<i>Coliform bacilli</i>
1 sample..	..	..	..	..	1
1 „	..	..	..	..	13
1 „	..	..	..	..	17
2 samples	..	..	..	..	180+
4 „	..	..	..	..	Excellent

Where analyses have proved unsatisfactory, follow-up samples have been taken and technical advice given on problems arising from collection and storage and possible sources of pollution.

The Newcastle & Gateshead Water Company took 145 samples from the main water supply in various parts of the area during the year. These were all of “excellent” or “satisfactory” bacteriological quality, except in 2 cases, which were the subject of check samples proving satisfactory. The Chief Chemist of the Throckley Laboratory (Dr. A. T. Palin) has been helpful and co-operative in any queries which have arisen.

## SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

The main settlement groups in the two principal valleys of the North Tyne and Rede have been provided with works of sewerage and sewage disposal :

Local Authority :	Bellingham Woodburn Wark Birtley Otterburn Kirkwhelpington Ridsdale	}	Operational
Septic Tanks :	Rochester Lanehead Greenhaugh Reedsmouth Kirkharle	}	Operational
Forestry Commission :	Kielder Butteryhaugh Stonehaugh Byrness Lewisburn Camping Site	}	Operational
Northumberland :			
County Council :	Brownrigg Camp School	}	Operational

A scheme has been prepared for the settlement of East Woodburn and submitted to the Ministry of Housing & Local Government. Problems still arise due to the inadequate staff for maintenance of Local Authority works — this is being the subject of consideration by the Council. Birtley Village — water carriage conversions are now complete : Ridsdale — outstanding water carriage conversions are being the subject of statutory action.

A further 11 treatment plants have been installed in private properties.

## HOUSING

### **Housing (Financial Provisions) Act 1958, as amended by the House Purchase & Housing Act 1959, Housing Act 1961 and Housing Act 1964**

Works of improvement on 25 dwellinghouses were made during the year by Discretionary grants. The improvements to such properties were made possible by financial assistance, including the provision to each house of a bathroom, hot and cold water system, inside w.c., and a drainage system with means of sewage disposal.

10 applications were received during the year for Standard grants.

It is worth recording that, to date, the total number of houses approved for grant-aid since the inception of the scheme is 295 (Discretionary), 36 (Standard Grants).

## PUBLIC CLEANSING

Systematic cleansing of the villages and properties along the route has been maintained. The areas covered are :

Bellingham	Wark	Ridsdale
Reedsmouth	Stonehaugh	Great Bavington
Greenhaugh	Birtley	Little Bavington
Kirkharle	Falstone	Rochester
Kirkwhelpington	Kielder	Otterburn
Byrness	East Woodburn	West Woodburn

**Tips.** There are eight tips in the area situate at :

Otterburn	Falstone	Stonehaugh
Hareshaw	Kielder	Byrness
Woodburn	Knowesgate	

The present service, operated by two vehicles, has reached its limit and any additional request for refuse collection is considered on its merits. During the year extreme difficulty has been experienced in maintaining the service due to labour problems and the unattractive nature of the work.

**Employees :** 2 loader-drivers and 3 loaders.

**Tonnage :** 3,020 tons.

The cost of such service is 10.338d. in the £.

## PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

One part-time operative is under Contract with the Council and methods of treatment are those approved by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food.

### Surveys and Treatments :

Farms and Business Premises	..	—
Tips .. .. .	..	4
Other properties	..	77
		—
Total	..	81
		—

## INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

### Slaughter of Animals Act, 1958

### Meat Inspection Regulations, 1963

There are four butchers in the area — one operates a slaughterhouse and three buy carcase meat. 100% meat inspection is maintained. 7 Slaughterman's licences have been issued.

Analysis of inspection is as under :

Cattle including cows	..	..	164
Pigs .. .. .	..	..	—
Sheep and Lambs	..	..	476
			—
Total	..	..	640
			—

Condemned :	<i>Bovine</i>	<i>Sheep</i>
Carcase of which some part or organ was condemned .. .. .	13	13
Percentage of numbers inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci ..	7.9	2.7

Other foods examined and found unfit for human consumption :—

1. Meat at slaughterhouses	..	..	Weight (lbs.)	156
2. Canned Meats	..	..	Tins	3
3. Fish.. .. .	..	..	„	4
4. Fruit and Vegetables	..	..	„	16
5. Other Foods	..	..	„	10



## FOOD HYGIENE (GENERAL REGULATIONS), 1960

Some 54 premises in the area come within the scope of this legislation. Regular and systematic inspection is maintained.

**Food Premises :** The following are the types of food premises in the district :

Bakeries	..	..	..	..	2
Butchers	..	..	..	..	4
Cafes ..	..	..	..	..	5
Clubs ..	..	..	..	..	4
General Dealers (Grocers, etc.)	..				18
Public Houses and Hotels	..	..			12
School Kitchens	..	..	..		9

## RIVERS AND STREAMS

5 cases were reported where nuisances through pollution were caused. Informal representation resolved these problems.

## OFFICES, SHOPS & RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963

Registration has covered the following classification :—

Offices..	..	..	..	..	6
Retail Shops	..	..	..	..	26
Catering Establishments	..	..			9
Wholesale Shops, Warehouses	..				1

Systematic and regular inspection is effected and progress made to implement this legislation.

## SUMMARY OF WORK EFFECTED

	By Informal Action	By Statutory Notice	Total
SANITARY CONVENIENCES :			
Privies and privy ashpits abolished ..	11	—	11
Water closets provided .. ..	35	—	35
Number of above for which grant was given (P.H.A. 1936, Sec. 47) .. ..	12	—	12
Sanitary bins provided .. ..	18	—	18
DRAINAGE :			
New drains constructed .. ..	47	—	47
Drains repaired or reconstructed ..	21	—	21
Additional gullies provided .. ..	104	—	104
Old gullies replaced .. ..	21	—	21
Scullery sinks provided .. ..	35	—	35
Scullery waste pipes repaired .. ..	10	—	10
Scullery waste pipes trapped .. ..	7	—	7
Yards repaired or reconstructed ..	7	—	7

## INSPECTIONS AND VISITS

## Housing :

Demolition .. ..	8
Improvements and Repairs ..	491
Verminous premises .. ..	3
Water Supply .. ..	49
Drainage .. ..	507
Factories and Workshops .. ..	51
Licensed Premises .. ..	201
Refuse Collection and Disposal ..	406
Rodent Control .. ..	27
Infectious Disease .. ..	8
Slaughterhouses .. ..	574
Shops .. ..	257
Fishmongers (vans) .. ..	9
Bakeries .. ..	51

# FACTORIES ACT, 1961

## Part I of the Act.

### I.—INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health

PREMISES (1)	Number on Register (2)	Number of		
		Inspections (3)	Written notices (4)	Occupiers prosecuted (5)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ... ..	12	13	—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority ... ..	18	21	—	—
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises) ... ..	—	—	—	—
TOTAL ... ..	30	34	—	—

### II.—Cases in which DEFECTS were found

(If defects are discovered at the premises on two, three or more separate occasion they should be reckoned as two, three or more “cases”).

PARTICULARS (1)	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted (6)
	Found (2)	Remedied (3)	To H.M. Inspector (4)	By H.M. Inspector (5)	
Want of Cleanliness (S. 1.) ... ..	5	5	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S. 2)... ..	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S. 3)	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S. 4)	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S. 6)	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences (S. 7)					
(a) Insufficient ... ..	2	2	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	—	—	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes ... ..	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Out-work)	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL ... ..	7	7	—	—	—

**Part VII of the Act. Sections 110 and 111.**

**Outwork.**

This part is not applicable to this Rural Area.

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To the Chairman of the Council, the Chairman and Members of the Health & Housing Committee, Dr. J. M. McEwan and members of the staff I express my thanks for the support rendered throughout the year.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

S. CLOUGH,

*Chief Public Health Inspector & Surveyor*





